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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Superintending School Committee

OF THE

TOWN OF WALPOLE,

WITH THE

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT,

1860-61.



BELLOWS FALLS, VT.

PRINTED AT THE PHENIX JOB PRINTING OFFICE.

1861.

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REPORT.

SUMMER SCHOOLS.

DISTRICT No. 2. Miss R. Marion Albee, teacher. This school does not present the most inviting field for labor to any teacher, and perhaps Miss Albee succeeded as well as any one could under the circumstances. Her amiability and grace mingled with a little more of that quality known as "gumption," would, we think, give more force to her efforts, and certainly secure better order than we found in her school.

No. 3. Miss A. C. Stowell, teacher. This school was not satisfactory. As the Prudential Committee re-engaged Miss Stowell to teach the Winter school, we take this occasion to say, that we never feel obliged to give any one a certificate to teach a Winter school because we gave one for the Summer school; and when, on the second examination, we find no improvement, we cannot recognize the old apology of "extreme bashfulness," and give a certificate for what any one says, "I know, only I can't tell it."

No. 4. Was taught by Miss O. L. Richardson, a faithful and efficient teacher. The school was a profitable one.

No. 5. Miss Carrie O. Mason, teacher. This was a good and profitable school; well taught and well governed; creditable to both teacher and scholars.

No. 6. Miss Mary L. Watkins, teacher. She managed the school with her usual success. This school, though small, ranks as one of our best. The constant attendance merits remark. There were only two instances of tardiness and seven absences during the term.

No. 7. No school.

No. 8 was under the care of Miss Nettie R. Burnham. This was her first school, yet she succeeded very well, and the scholars made fair progress. We think Miss Burnham promises well as a teacher. For some cause the Register was only partly filled out.

No. 9. Miss Mason taught this school very satisfactorily. The scholars, though small and backward, made good progress in their studies.

No. 10. Teacher, Miss Helen J. Dickey. This was her first attempt in teaching, and was, in general, a successful one. There was a lack of energy and promptness in most of the exercises, which we hope will be overcome in future. Otherwise, the school appeared well.

No. 11. Miss H. C. Collins, teacher. This is one of the smallest schools in the town. Miss Collins is a veteran teacher, which is her principal recommendation. The school is backward and did not make much progress under her administration.

No. 12. This school was taught by Miss Eva F. Fisher. We cannot speak positively of the success of her efforts, as, in consequence of an accident to the teacher, the school closed the day before we went to visit it. At our first visit it appeared well. The teacher seemed to understand her duties, and we expected a successful school, and think it was so.

No. 13. Miss Irena Wellington, who taught this school, is one of our most experienced teachers. She sustained her previous reputation, and the scholars made commendable progress.

No. 14 was taught by Miss Mary A. Waite. She appeared anxious to keep a good school, and her labors were attended with a fair degree of success. This was her first school, and more experience will enable her to direct her efforts more efficiently.

WINTER SCHOOLS.

No. 2 was taught by George Davis with tolerable success—a great improvement on the Summer term, so far as order was concerned. Thoroughness was not a striking feature in the school. The scholars were taught more to

do particular things, than to think and tell "how and why." A commendable degree of improvement was made by some of the younger classes. The interest felt in the success of this school by the citizens of the district, is easily determined by the number of their visits, which was *one*! From an examination of the register we might reasonably suppose that the district was infected with every species of contagious disease, as their were 594 absences and 111 tardinesses. We do not understand by what arithmetical process the teacher ascertained, as was recorded in the register, that 33 practiced Reading and Spelling, when the whole number attending school was only 31!

No. 3. Miss Mary L. Watkins, teacher. At our first visit we were full of apprehension lest the school would prove a failure; but by earnest and well directed labors, she overcame all obstacles, maintained order and taught a good school. A commendable degree of interest in the school was manifested by the number of visits from citizens of the district and others. At the close, prizes and rewards of merit were distributed for good spelling. Such private beneficence is rare and worthy especial praise. For the benefit of the teacher, we quote the following extract from the School Commissioner's report after visiting this school: "Earnest teachers frequently make a fatal mistake, and counteract their own best efforts, by reciting the lesson instead of requiring their pupils to do it."

We would suggest the propriety of providing something to which a visitor can comfortably fasten a horse. It is decidedly inconvenient to tie to a stone wall. These remarks apply with equal force to many other districts in town. In the summer, when a gate or some bars are in close proximity, the inconvenience is not so great as in winter, when it is hazardous to leave the well-trodden track, and attempt to reach some neighboring post half buried in the snow.

No. 4. Mr. G. C. Starkweather taught in this school nearly 16 weeks. He appeared well qualified for the place, and the school opened with good prospects. We went to visit it before the close, but did not find it in session. We were prevented from being present at the examination and cannot speak of the progress made.

No. 5. Miss Ellen P. Peck, teacher. This was a successful school. In these days when unworthy itinerant pedagogues

infest the land, more intent upon the "almighty dollar" they may receive, than upon the intellectual and moral improvement of the youth under their charge, the Prudential Committee in this district should consider himself exceedingly fortunate in being able to secure the services of valuable teachers for both Summer and Winter terms. The school house reflects no credit upon the district. In addition to the bad arrangement of seats, &c., inside, it also lacks the necessary appendage outside to contribute to the comfort, convenience and health of the scholars.

No. 6. Mr. D. L. Mansfield taught this school with very good success. Here were several excellent scholars, and the school as a whole made decided progress. Both teacher and scholars are entitled to credit for the faithful performance of their duties. The attendance was not as good as in some previous terms, principally on account of sickness, and the withdrawal of four pupils, two weeks before the close of the term, without any just reason, as appears to us.

No. 7 was taught by Miss Irena Wellington. The scholars recited very correctly, and we were satisfied that they had been thoroughly and faithfully drilled in their studies, and that they had made good advancement.

No. 8. Mr. William H. Rand had the care of this school. He appeared desirous to promote the advancement of his pupils, and we think those who remained through the term and were constant in their attendance made good progress. But as some trouble arose, which resulted in the withdrawal of several scholars, the school as a whole could not be expected to prosper as well as it would otherwise have done.

No. 9. Mr. J. Houghton, teacher. As in Summer, the scholars were mostly small and backward, but appeared to have made considerable progress. The deportment was good. Though the school did not bear so positive a character as we would like to have seen, yet the teacher seemed to have been faithful and the scholars disposed to do well, for which all deserve credit.

No. 10. Teacher, Mr. William Starkweather. At our first visit the school appeared to be doing well, and we knew nothing to the contrary till towards the close. No formal complaint was made to us till the end of the tenth week, when we were informed that a majority of the district were

dissatisfied and had been for several weeks ; but had kept quiet upon the understanding that the school would continue but ten weeks. They would now send their scholars no longer, and all but six or seven left. We were called upon to interpose and stop the school. After investigation and inquiry, we were convinced that it could be no possible advantage, either to the teacher or the school, to be continued longer, and we advised that it close up at once. This advice was not heeded, and the teacher was dismissed.

We cannot enter into the details of this unpleasant affair, to show where all the blame rests. We think all parties in fault to some extent. The teacher had given occasion for dissatisfaction in some things, and if he desires to be successful in future, we hope he will be more careful of his general deportment and influence, which have been in some respects unbecoming the office of teacher. On the other hand we think the disaffected ones should have moved in the matter earlier, if they had any good ground for complaint, and had it settled before so late a stage of the school. We do not think parents are justified, in any case, in taking their children out of school, till they have sought, and failed to find, a remedy in some other way, more in accordance with the general welfare of the school.

No. 11. Miss H. C. Collins, teacher. We received no notice of the close of this school, consequently can give no report except to refer back to that of the Summer school, which was taught by the same teacher. The register was imperfectly kept, and this being the most independent district in the town, it may be well to state that no teacher is entitled to any compensation for services, until the register is duly and fully made out, presented to, and approved by the Superintending School Committee, and the Prudential Committee is liable for the amount if paid before.

No. 12 was taught by Mr. E. S. Stoddard. He worked faithfully for the advancement of his pupils, and his labors were crowned with very good success. As a whole the school appeared well and made good progress. The order was entirely satisfactory.

No. 13. This school was commenced by Mr. Mason. It was his first school. He was a good scholar, and tried to do well ; but we were fearful, at our first visit, that he would fail to manage his school successfully. After a trial

of three weeks our fears were confirmed, and he was advised to leave, which he did. Mr. J. A. Fiske was hired to take his place. He proved to be a very efficient and faithful teacher, and the school very soon assumed a different appearance. The closing examination was highly satisfactory.

No. 14 was taught by Miss Mary J. Kingsbury, who succeeded well in her labors for the advancement of her scholars, and the appearance of the school was quite good.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The success of our schools for the past year, has been various. Some were remarkably prosperous, others of a very indifferent character, while a few entirely failed. Yet the majority of them were good schools, and nothing has occurred to weaken our confidence in our common school system. There are draw-backs in every good cause. We must expect them here. Yet after all proper deductions, our schools are doing a great and noble work.

If you discover a larger number of absences than usual, it is owing in part to the uncommon amount of snow-drifts, which sometimes seriously impede the cause of education ; in part to sickness among the scholars, and in a few of the districts to an epidemic among parents, which is laid down in none of the medical works, and for which we have yet found no remedy.

Teachers should be more careful than they are, in filling out their registers. Some of the registers were very neatly kept, and correctly filled out. We are thankful that some teachers know and do their duty in this particular. But many of those returned to us wore an air of negligence which was anything but creditable to our teachers. Some of them were made out wholly with pencil, others were incomplete—the most important items not carried out at all, while others were done in such hieroglyphics that it would require wiser heads than ours to decipher them.

While our schools are doing a good work, it is evident that they might and ought to do more, and take a higher

rank than they now hold. In order that they do this, many things are necessary. We need thoroughly qualified teachers. Not simply in the branches to be taught, but qualified to impart instruction, and to manage a school profitably.

We want teachers who know how to control themselves, and have a capacity for governing others. Teachers of good moral character, correct habits, gentle and affable manners, combined with energy, promptness and decision. Teachers who understand how to wake up the minds of their pupils, and make them think and understand. Education, in its true sense, is not a process of constant dipping from books and pouring into the mind, like filling a vessel with water. It is not committing to memory so many rules and definitions. It is a drawing out and developing of the faculties and powers of the mind. The good teacher will teach his pupils how to think, and to acquire for themselves, as well as require them to repeat from books.

Then we must have teachers who love their employment, and who are aiming constantly to improve themselves. They should feel that theirs is a noble and important calling, and they should strive to honor it. If they would interest their scholars, they must first be interested themselves. If they enter the school-room only for the sake of earning a little money, or because they can find no other employment, they will fail. Their duties will be irksome. They will be like overseers of a prison to the children, and all will rejoice when they have served out their three month's sentence. It were better to dig or beg, than attempt to train immortal minds with no heart in the work. We want teachers who enter the employment because they love it, and purpose to devote to it their best energies.

We also want teachers whose general character and deportment are such that they will exert a healthful moral influence over their pupils. Too little attention is given to the morals, habits and manners of the children, which is certainly a very important branch of education. The law re-

quires that no person shall be employed as a teacher who does not furnish satisfactory evidence of a good moral character. The statute further says "It shall be the duty of all persons entrusted with, or engaged in the instruction of the young, diligently to impress upon their minds the principles of piety and justice, a sacred regard for truth, love of country, humanity and benevolence; sobriety, industry and frugality; chastity, moderation and temperance; and all other virtues which are the ornament and support of human society." No person, then, is either fit for a teacher, or legally qualified, whose moral deportment is exceptionable; for these virtues are inculcated as much by example as by precept. All formal lessons will be useless unless they practice what they teach.

Now in order to have the right kind of teachers the first thing is to *demand* them, and be satisfied with no other; and not feel that the most profitable ones are those who will keep the greatest number of weeks for the money. The supply of every thing will be according to the demand. If we are contented with second rate teachers, we shall have them and no other. Those who intend to teach will prepare themselves just according to the standard which exists in community.

Then we must duly appreciate the services of a good teacher, and encourage and support him. In this way we shall soon have more efficient teachers and profitable schools.

This leads us to say in conclusion, that if we hope to see our schools take a high position, all must be interested in them and labor together to promote their welfare. Their success depends not on the efforts of the Committee, nor the teachers alone; but upon the combined exertions of all concerned in them.

J. M. STOW,
J. WM. KNIGHT,
GEORGE A. BLAKE.

TABLE I.

SUMMER SCHOOLS.

DISTRICTS,	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Length of School, in weeks.	12	12	12	9	8		10	14	12	8	11	12	12
Wages of female Teacher, per month, including board.	\$17	\$13	\$14	\$12	\$13.33		\$14	\$13	\$12	\$14	\$16	\$12	\$14
Scholars 4 years of age and upwards.	28	23	27	12	11		15	23	13	13	22	14	13
Average attendance.	23	17½	21½	10½	10½		13½	19½	11½	11½	19.25	12½	11½
Scholars between 4 and 16 years.	28	22	27	11	11		15	23	13	13	22	14	13
Scholars over 16.	0	1	0	1	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of tardinesses.	55	6	21	6	2		17	32	10	54	4	55	5
Number not absent.	1	0	0	6	7		2	2	1	1	7	3	2
Number not tardy.	12	18	21	6	9		4	17	6	2	18	8	10
Number not absent or tardy.	1	0	0	0	5		2	2	0	1	5	3	2
Number of absences.	330	363	371	62	7		85	280	110	77	156	110	85
Number of visits by Superintending School Committee.	2	2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2	1	2	2
Number of visits by Prudential Committee.	0	2	0	0	1		2	2	1	0	2	2	5
Number of visits by citizens and others.	8	27	39	28	29	No School.	63	45	61	11	40	27	18

TABLE II.
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WINTER SCHOOLS.

Districts.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Length of School, in weeks.	12	15	16	14	13	16	12	13½		13	12	8	12
Wages of male Teacher, per month, including board.	\$27	\$24	\$30	\$21	\$26	\$20	\$26	\$30 40		\$20 50	\$39	\$31	\$22
Wages of female Teacher, per month, including board.	31	36	26	19	19	13	21	27		15	31	21	18
Number of Scholars 4 years of age and upward.	22	33½	20	16½	16½	7½	16	22½		9	26½	18	17½
Average attendance.	27	34	24	14	13	12	14	23		11	30	19	18
Number of Scholars between 4 and 16.	4	2	2	5	6	1	7	4		4	1	2	0
Number of Scholars over 16.	111	34	31	51	4	3	57	176		52	16	80	50
Number of tardinesses.	0	6	1	4	3	0	2	5		2	6	7	9
Number not absent.	4	18	22	7	14	12	6	7		5	21	5	6
Number not tardy.	0	5	1	3	3	0	2	0		2	5	3	3
Number not absent or tardy.	540	288	432	186	189	242	336	300		432	250	124	33
Number of absences.	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2		1	3	2	2
Number of visits by Superintendenting School Committee.	0	56	56	49	18	20	15	44		27	50	35	27
Number of visits by Prudential Committee.									Register not returned.				
Number of visits by citizens and others.	1	56	56	49	18	20	15	44		27	50	35	27

REPORT

OF THE

SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF DISTRICT No. 1.

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

This school was taught during the year by Miss Annah D. Smith. Most of the scholars were too young to be confined closely to study, or if they could be, it would be an injury rather than a benefit. In this department instruction must be imparted by various and simple methods, and frequent opportunity given for physical exercise, much of which we think can be better done in the school-room, and under the eye of the teacher than elsewhere. Therefore a teacher to be successful, must depend more upon her own ingenuity than upon books. In these respects we think the school was well managed during the past year. Perhaps not as much advance was made in some of the studies as at some other times, but the general influence was very good. The school appeared well at the several examinations, and at other times when we visited it, and as a whole, considering what is to be expected of such a school, we were satisfied with the progress made.

INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT.

Miss Rosette H. Rust continued in this school, completing her fourth year. Perhaps it is enough for us to say that her previous reputation was fully sustained. She has man-

ifested a very deep interest in her pupils, and they in her. The school has been highly successful since under her care, and has never done better than during the year just closed.

HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. L. R. Smith taught in this department during the year, and the appearance of the school at our several visits was highly creditable to teacher and scholars, and the progress in general was satisfactory to your committee. More attention has been given to Reading and Spelling than usual in this school, and we think with profit.

One marked feature of all the schools has been the quiet manner in which they have progressed. There have been but few jars or disturbances of any sort. Another thing we are pleased to record, is the unusual interest manifested by citizens and others in their frequent visits, especially in the two lower schools. 528 visits were made to these two schools alone.

There is an impression in the minds of some, that the standard of admission to the High School has been lowered, and that scholars of almost any acquirements are permitted to enter. This is a mistake. The standard is now higher by more than one-sixth, than in the commencement. Some scholars may have been admitted who were not as well qualified as they should be, for we do not claim infallibility in this matter; but we are confident that the general standard has not been lowered, and that the scholarship in the High School will compare well with that of any other period. The average age of the scholars admitted now, is less than it was at first; and this is a very significant fact, and one that speaks volumes for the success of the lower schools in which these scholars have been trained. There are now scholars in the High School, and well qualified, who commenced in the Primary department since one of the present committee has had charge of the schools—or within six years. It is very evident that the stimu-

lus which the hope of reaching the High School imparts, does much to make the other two successful, without which they would soon fall below what they now are.

Just at the close of the year, we heard some fault found that some of the teachers dismissed their schools at improper hours, but as we had no personal knowledge of the facts, and as no complaint was made to us directly we did nothing in regard to it. But if any who were not satisfied had spoken to us, or to the teachers, in regard to it, probably all would have been put right at once.

On the other hand, we were desired by some who have scholars in the Primary school, to adopt the plan of having but two hours each half day, instead of three. Now with reference to this whole matter we will say, that we think it best that all the schools should be kept the full number of hours each day, and for the following reasons: 1st. It was the understanding when the plan was adopted of having but five days of school in a week, that there should be no other parts of holidays. 2nd. Parents ought to know at what hour their children are to be dismissed, for obvious reasons. 3d. Scholars attend the different schools from the same families, and it is not convenient that they be dismissed at different times. And 4th, if one school is at liberty while the others are keeping, it has a bad influence upon the scholars which are confined. We trust a single suggestion will be sufficient, and that there will be no ground for complaint in future, if there has been in the past.

J. M. STOW,
J. WM. KNIGHT,
GEO. A. BLAKE.

TABLE III.

DISTRICT No. 1.

	SPRING TERM.			FALL TERM.			WINTER TERM.		
	Primary.	Intermediate.	High School.	Primary.	Intermediate.	High School.	Primary.	Intermediate.	High School.
Length of School, in weeks, -	12	12	12	12	12	12	11 3-5	12	12
Ages of Teacher per month, inc. board,	\$22 00	\$24 00	\$55 33	\$22 00	\$24 00	\$55 33	\$22 00	\$26 00	\$55 33
Scholars 4 years of age and upward, -	38	33	30	41	37	36	27	40	40
Average attendance, -	30½	28½	25 2-5	31	31¾	31½	21½	33¾	32¾
Scholars between 4 and 16, -	38	33	28	41	37	26	27	38	33
Scholars over 16, -	0	0	2	0	0	10	0	2	7
Number of tardinesses, -	14	14	21	23	27	35	4	94	103
Number not absent, -	7	7	4	5	8	5	2	4	1
Number not tardy, -	28	27	23	30	30	21	24	26	18
Number not absent or tardy, -	7	7	5	5	7	4	2	4	1
Number of absences, -	450	267	276	600	320½	280	319	321½	435
Visits by Superintendent, -	7	8	7	6	6	5	2	5	3
Visits by Prudential Committee, -	1	4	4	0	1	0	2	2	3
Visits of citizens and others, -	103	112	73	78	41	122	114	78	135

